

This document contains information
referring to Project HEADQUARTERS

CHAL 0215✓
Cy / of 7

27 June 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Assistant to the Director
for Planning and Development

SUBJECT : Camera Port Covers

1. In response to your query of 20 June, the following information is submitted:

a. The purpose of the camera port covers is to protect the surfaces of the glass: (1) while the aircraft is parked on the ramp (i. e., sand and gravel, debris, etc. blasted onto window surfaces by other aircraft, and (2) during take-off roll from debris deflected from wheels, splash of mud during inclement weather, etc.

b. In actual practice, it has been determined that:

(1) Since [] remains in hangar until immediately prior to take-off on operational missions, damage to camera ports caused by run-up of other aircraft is not likely.

(2) On aircraft with tricycle landing gear, debris, mud, etc. deflected onto the camera ports by the nosewheel during take-off can cause serious damage to camera port glasses and impair the quality of photography taken thru such glass. However, since the U-2 is tandem-wheeled and since the camera ports are fore of the main tandem wheel, damage from this source is not a problem.

2. As you are aware, the system originally used was for the pilot to eject the camera hatches after take-off but prior to reaching the end of the runway. A vehicle would then be dispatched to the runway and hatches collected for reuse. Since it appeared that the hatches were not needed insofar as protecting the port glasses (see paragraph 1 b (1) and (2)) and since the hatches did not always eject properly, Detachment "B" commenced removing camera port hatches prior to take-off approximately one year ago. Until recent reports indicated the 2 left "B" camera port cover had failed to eject on two occasions, it was assumed that Detachment "C" was also manually removing ports prior to take-off. On receipt of this information, [] queried [] unit as to procedure used and requested comments and/or recommendations. [] reply [] 4578 - IN 41449) indicated general agreement with removing ports prior to take-off and proposing that, if Project Headquarters adopts this procedure, that the camera port cover ejection system be removed and that the weight gained be used for installation of an Omni-directional navigational system.

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3. [] unit has been notified to remove camera port covers prior to take-off on photographic missions (copy of message attached).

4. An evaluation of the camera port ejection system versus an Omni-directional navigational system will be completed as soon as possible. At present, the camera port covers afford protection to the glass when aircraft are flown on transition or ferry flights with camera hatches installed. A preliminary opinion is that the port glasses could be covered with masking tape or that light weight manual ejection system could be devised to replace the existing system.

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Director of Operations

Attachment (1):
Cy msg.

DPS/DCI/RSQ:aem

Dist.:

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Remarks: Doris: Mr B was particularly interested in the action taken concerning the attached. <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> asked that we hand this paper to Mr B as soon as he arrives. Please give me a ring if he has any questions. Thanks. <input type="checkbox"/>					
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